

Welcoming 2023 with challenges

As we review news reports of the past year, 2022 saw the removal of nearly all COVID-19 restrictions and the reopening of international borders in most countries, and the global rollout of COVID-19 vaccines continued. But the ongoing war in Ukraine has been causing world-wide food shortages and inflation along with the untold losses of lives. The ramifications of conflicts in other parts of the world are certainly going to continue into this new year. There are both good and bad news that may prevail which will require a united global cooperation to mitigate if not to completely resolve economic and political upheavals. Due to climate change, migration is going to continue for a while thus refugees seeking asylum will require immediate attention and resources to process them in a more humanitarian way.

What are the challenges for 2023? Most news reports indicate that there are at least ten or more global issues which need urgent attention to resolve. Needless to say, benevolent and effective leadership is required in all aspects of diplomatic negotiations to settle common and complex problems. Listed hereunder are these challenges which appeared in most reports. We are quoting excerpts that contain the gist of facts gathered by researchers to have a general view on

some of the challenges highlighted in various news reports as well as by the World Bank:



More evident slowdown in advanced economies

As explained by Ayhan Kose, director of the research office of the World Bank, “this is the weakest growth in the last thirty years, except for the 2008 crisis and the post-pandemic of 2020. The slowdown is general and the evolution of the world economy is complex». In the event of a one percentage point rate hike by the world central banks, Kose added, “the

weight on global growth would be 0.6%, thus causing a 0.3% drop in per capita GDP and therefore a global

technical recession”. As highlighted by the World Bank, the slowdown will be more evident in developed countries: growth of 0.5% is expected in the United States (compared to 1.9% estimated last June) and zero growth in the Eurozone (again compared to the previous 1.9%). Even emerging countries will not be spared: Chinese growth is now expected at 4.3% (0.9 percentage points less) and other emerging and developed countries

should see their economies grow by 2.7%.

Eurozone zero growth in 2023 with high energy and inflation

In the Eurozone, activity in the first half of 2022 exceeded expectations, with the result that annual growth has been revised to 3.3%. In the second half, however, there was a substantial weakening as a result of the jump in energy prices, supply uncertainties and rising financing costs,” reads the report. The institute reports that “inflation hit record levels after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, leading to cuts in global gas supplies and rising costs which, despite some recent improvements, remain above pre-war levels” . Given all of this, the World Bank expects a contraction in the first half of 2023 and a stabilization in the second half of the year. Inflation should moderate, also due to the drop in energy prices.

Poverty alarm in Sub-Saharan Africa

The institute also expressed concern about the social consequences of the slowdown and in terms of fighting global warming and poverty. In sub-Saharan Africa, where 60% of people considered to be in extreme poverty live, the expected growth will probably be insufficient to

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Tech layoffs mount — but skilled workers are still hard to find

Tens of thousands of jobs eliminated this week as big firms cut back
Peter Armstrong · CBC News · Posted: Jan 21, 2023 4:00 AM EST

Some of the biggest tech companies in the world announced a wave of layoffs this week, eliminating tens of thousands of jobs as they reverse course after years of expanding.

Google's parent company said on Friday it would cut 12,000 jobs. Microsoft and Amazon eliminated a combined 28,000 jobs on Wednesday. All told, tech companies have shed more than 200,000 jobs since the summer.

But "this was largely expected," said Alex Zukin, the managing director at Wolfe Research. "I think that many companies are right-sizing their staff."



The exterior of the new Google Bay View campus on May 16, in Mountain View, Calif. The 42 acres of campus totals 1.1 million square feet, with two office buildings, an event center, and 20 acres of open space. (Aric Crabb / Bay Area News Group / TNS)

He says most of the big-name tech companies expanded dramatically through the pandemic. They made big bets that the way people and businesses behaved during the COVID restrictions in 2020 was a permanent shift to a more online way of living.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said in an email to employees that customers were, in fact, also adjusting to a slowing economy and trying to "optimize their digital spend to do more with less."

Zukin says Microsoft is a perfect example of a company that expanded too much too quickly.

Nadella took the company "from 60,000 employees to 220,000. So, they are cutting back on 10,000, which is not too surprising," said Zukin.

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

How the 4th Industrial Revolution is impacting our daily life

Zenaïda Ferry Kharroubi

Changes always happen in every field of human endeavour. But at this time, something very significant is happening around us which we may not be fully aware of that the 4th Industrial Revolution is impacting our life in almost everything we do. The current situation described in the following excerpt from an article in the World Economic Forum seems to describe a new phenomenon that we have never experienced nor imagined before.

“CEOs across many sectors describe one painful current quandary. They have said in effect: ‘I have to lay off hundreds of people because their jobs have disappeared and I do not need their skills – and I have hundreds of job openings I can’t fill because I can’t find people with the right training and skills.’ This mismatch is bad for everyone: Lives are derailed, families and communities damaged, business opportunities lost.”

This mismatch between capital and labor should be of concern to all who wish to have a good standard of living. A good advice can be gleaned in the following statements quoted from the same article:

“For people with industry

expertise who need to become proficient in digital or problem-solving skills, including teachers seeking to prepare their students for the future, an answer could be ‘continuous uptraining’: a system that would allow every employee to devote significant time – every week, every month or every year – to acquiring fresh skills. If educational institutions, employers and employees can imagine and refine a solution together, continuous up training could become a crucial tool to help individuals adapt to relentless change.”

To put it simply, the so-called “uptraining” is synonymous to “continuous learning” which is a life-long process. The need to keep up to date is obvious but surprisingly, there are still many who are having a hard time coping with these rapid changes yet they are not doing anything about it. Oftentimes, they say things like “I’m too old to learn French.” Or I have already studied at” (mentioning a university, as if they are saying they are not interested to take a non-credit course as they do not have a clear understanding what advantages a self-improvement or continuing education is all about. They also appear to

disregard the accessibility of a small private school like Gilmore College International and their attention is just focused on the big schools that charge higher fees or taking a free course regardless of how they are delivered. Another common excuse is “I’m too busy to study again.” Needless to say, time can be found if the value of a continuing or life-long learning is appreciated and valued. Nobody knows everything, and it will be a good idea to have an interest in acquiring more knowledge wherever it can be found.

Generally speaking, “linear thinking”, as one writer suggests, is the result of being absorbed with the daily crises that our decision makers face which prevent them from adopting strategies and innovation for the 4th Industrial Revolution. Likewise, civil society may also need to pay attention to the relentless changes happening everywhere. It is evidently imperative that we all start doing our part in making sure that we are ready to face the challenges of this revolution which is currently in our midst. The most propitious time appears to be this New Year 2023.

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World Economic Forum Annual Meeting

Exhibit 8: Probability of a job becoming automatable



Source: University of Oxford, C. B. Frey and M. Osborne, Morgan Stanley Research Note: Select occupations ranked according to the probability of becoming automatable.

L. Rafael Reif
President Emeritus, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

For those of us fortunate enough to come together at Davos this year, the Fourth Industrial Revolution promises gains in scientific knowledge, human health, economic growth and more. But for most people around the world, the prospect of a future in which robots and computers can perform many human jobs is a source of profound personal concern.

As president of an institute with ‘technology’ in its name and ‘the betterment of humankind’ in its mission, I take these concerns seriously. Every past technology wave ultimately produced more jobs than it destroyed and delivered important gains, from higher living standards and life expectancy to productivity and economic growth. Yet many fear that

this time the change may be so fast and so vast, and its impact so uneven and disruptive, that it may threaten not only individual livelihoods but the stability of society itself.

This outcome is not inevitable. The future is in our hands. Indeed, deliberate, coordinated action is exactly what smoothed the way for such transitions in the past. If we want the advance of technology to benefit everyone, however, we need to take action right away. We must proactively and thoughtfully reinvent the future of work.

Simply understanding the problem is a challenge. Experts still disagree on exactly which groups and regions are losing jobs primarily to automation, how quickly such impacts will spread and what interventions might help. To build sound, long-term policy on something this important, we cannot rely on anecdotes. Government, foundation and corporate leaders need to invest in better data - today.

In the meantime, we must act on what we do know and make progress wherever we can. For instance, CEOs across many sectors describe one painful current quandary. They have said to me, in effect: “I have to lay off hundreds of people because their jobs have disappeared and I do not need their skills – and I have hundreds of job openings I can’t fill

because I can't find people with the right training and skills.” This mismatch is bad for everyone: Lives are derailed, families and communities damaged, business opportunities lost.

Technology itself offers one path to a solution. In fields from robotics and cybersecurity to supply chain management, many universities, including MIT, are pioneering online programmes - such as MicroMasters - that provide top-quality, industry-relevant skills and credentials, in a form recognised by leading employers, and at a fraction of the price of traditional higher education.

For people with industry expertise who need to become proficient in digital or problem-solving skills, including teachers seeking to prepare their students for the future, an answer could be ‘continuous

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Alvin Thomas Dahan Veloso

To help is a hallmark of the Filipino identity; a distinguishing trait that sets Filipinos apart from other cultures. The spirit of bayanihan unites, inspires and energizes community efforts to achieve common goals, notably visible in religious, cultural, professional and civic organizations.

The spirit of unity and purpose

The Bayanihan Spirit and the Evolving Filipino Community

was the brainchild of the Filipino Golden Agers Association, the Filipino Association of Montreal and Suburbs and the Filipino Canadian Association of the West Island.

The other original members included the Philippine Dance Troupe of Montreal, the Montreal Filipino Bowling Club, and the Filipino Canadian Sports Association of Montreal and Suburbs.

The government grants from Canada and Quebec helped the Federation set up its first administrative office at the Dominion Square building on Ste. Catherine Street in Montreal with secretary and extra personnel. The financial resources helped organize workshops, conferences, meetings to deliberate on issues affecting the youth, the elderly, Filipino identity, homemakers' work conditions among others.

The Filipino Federation partnered with Folklore Canada



The Kalinangan Dance Troupe showcasing the signature Philippine singkil dance at the Festival Internacional del Mundo in Spain (July 1993)

occasion also marked the maiden presentation of the newly formed Kalinangan Dance Troupe of Montreal before their travel to Spain to participate at the XVII Festival Internacional del Mundo. The dance group was also invited during the visit to Montreal by the late Pres. Fidel Ramos of the Philippines.

Undoubtedly, the passion, efforts, and sacrifices of everyone,

cultural life contributions as Canadians.

It will be a challenge for the next generation of Filipinos in Quebec to maintain or continue to improve on the legacy of earlier Filipinos. Demography, change of status and opportunities will obviously be a factor, but let us not be deterred by the fear of gloom and doom concerns.

Respect must be earned and not gratuitous. As Filipino Canadians,



Federation Executive Council (1982-1984): Seated from left to right: Cora Santiago, secretary general; Leony Abelardo, director; Julie Parado, assistant treasurer; Alvin D. Veloso, president; Natalie Pelausa, treasurer; Flor Garcia, asst. business manager. Standing left to right: Bert Abiera, asst. auditor; Pete Vergara, auditor; Nemia Saldua, director; Agnes Umali, director; Norma Villarosa, business manager; Pete Guidote, 1st vice-president; Angie Ogerio, director; Joe Escorial, PRO; and Lee Sanga, 2nd vice-president. (Editor's note: Some of these Federation officers have passed away many years ago, but most of them are still with us.)

helped energize the Filipino Catholic community to acquire the former St. Thomas the Apostle church building which became the sanctuary of Notre-Dame-des-Philippines Catholic Mission of Montreal.

The Filipino Association of Montreal and Suburbs was formed in the early 60s for socio-cultural purposes and to help newly arrived Filipino migrants adjust to a new life and culture.

Few years ago, FAMAS bought a property on Van Horne Ave. in Montreal and converted the facility into the Philippine Community Center for multipurpose uses as an office and a work center for the organization and volunteers.

The surge of multiple associations prompted the community-based leaders to form the Federation of Filipino Canadian Associations of Quebec as the voice of the people. It

International, the Association of Oriental Cultures in the promotion of culture and traditions and was the first to introduce in Montreal the traditional cotillion.

In mid 60s, the Philippine Folk Art Society took over from the Federation the role to promote the Filipino heritage through folk dances, music, culinary and the arts. The cotillion was the Society's signature activity that became popular among young debutantes while pursuing also other activities. The Literary Cavalcade workshop conducted by some Filipino poets and writers was intellectually engaging, the art exhibit of Filipino artists and painters was impressive for its creativity and display of talent.

In Montreal, the Philippine Centennial celebration in 1998 sparked patriotism with two patriotic tableaux presentation of "Ako'y Pilipino" and "Bayan Ko" organized by the Philippine Folk Art Society of Quebec. The



Debutantes ball by the Philippine Folk Art Society at Chateau Champlain Hotel (1998)

especially the churches, community leaders of organizations have given Filipinos in Quebec reasons to be proud, deserving respect and acknowledgement for the social and

the opportunities are limitless to show who we are. If nothing seems to work, let the Filipino pride, confidence and trust in our God-given talents be the guide. #

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Automation

uptraining': a system that would allow every employee to devote significant time – every week, every month or every year – to acquiring fresh skills. If educational institutions, employers and employees can imagine and refine a solution together, continuous uptraining could become a crucial tool to help individuals adapt to relentless change.

Reinventing the future of work needs to be a whole-society effort – and finding long-term solutions will require ideas and initiative from every quarter. Could educators, from kindergarten to college, make sure that every graduate, in every field, is computationally literate? Could institutions like MIT do better at helping students balance efficiency with other human values in

choosing the problems they work on and in how they design solutions? Could workers help develop automating technologies that make humans more effective and efficient, instead of obsolete? Could corporations use some of the profits earned through automation to invest in developing those employees whose jobs have been erased by automation? Could unions help shape more relevant and accessible apprenticeship and uptraining programs? Could governments develop educational incentives that would motivate firms to locate in hard-hit regions?

I believe the answer to all those questions can and should be yes – and I'm certain we need many more and better ideas, too. ###

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fight it effectively: «We expect a growth of 1% of GDP per capita, which is by far lower than that needed to eradicate extreme poverty,” said Kose, explaining that “it will be almost impossible to reduce poverty or even inequality at the levels we would like.

Balance cost-cutting and innovation priorities

Leaders might read the financial trends and focus 2023 on cost-cutting initiatives such as automation programs, modernizing infrastructure, or platform consolidations. But transformations must go beyond cost efficiencies and tactical customer experience improvements.

Digital transformation programs should include developing new products, growing digital sales channels, and delivering new AI/ML capabilities, and these are generally multiyear investments. Taking your foot off the gas pedal in 2023 while competitors continue to invest is a recipe for disruption

Retain, train, and empower transformational leaders

Don't cut the training budget or provide fewer learning and development opportunities. This is particularly important if you want to increase the velocity of your digital transformations and demonstrate business impacts in a year where executives are prone to cut back on innovation budgets, learning programs, and leadership coaching.

Spend more time learning about market changes, talking to customers, and partnering with business leaders on growth and operational plans. That means less

time overseeing architecture, coaching agile teams, driving DevOps standards, or improving data governance.

The 7 Biggest Business Challenges Every Company Is Facing In 2023

Here are the seven greatest challenges every company should be ready for in 2023:

1. Inflation and Economic Downturn

The headlines are already filled with talk of skyrocketing inflation, and that trend will likely continue in 2023. Many economies will stagnate or shrink, and businesses need to prepare for that reality.

2. Supply Chain Security

Supply chain security is another key issue. Challenges began with COVID-related backlogs and have been made worse by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and labor shortages due to the Great Resignation. This has made parts and products harder to obtain, as well as pushed prices up (e.g., energy, grains, computer chips, oil, and so on).

According to a report by Accenture, supply chain issues could result in a potential 920 billion cumulative loss to the gross domestic product (GDP) across the Eurozone by 2023.

3. Increasing Customer Expectations

Customers are demanding more immersive customer experiences in the real world as well as in the metaverse.

Customers entering brick-and-mortar stores aren't just looking to buy products — they want memorable in-store experiences. If your company has physical shops, consider adding more immersive experiences.

Online retailers should

consider adding extended reality (XR) experiences like virtual dressing rooms that allow customers to “try on” clothing, accessories, and makeup without leaving their homes.

4. Accelerated Digital Transformation

Artificial intelligence (AI) is already starting to augment all of our businesses, and that trend will continue to accelerate next year. At the same time, other technologies like 5G, blockchain, the cloud, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are building and speeding up AI, and all of them are enhancing each other.

This is rapidly creating a world of ever-faster technological developments. In response, every business must think of itself as a tech business. Companies need to re-design their processes and ensure their people have the skills needed for a world where we increasingly collaborate with and work alongside capable and intelligent machines.

5. The War for Talent Will Intensify

Speaking of workers — companies in 2023 must be ready to cope with a continued talent shock. We've been hearing about the “War for Talent” for years, but now it feels like the war is deepening.

Companies across industries are facing massive gaps for vital future skills, and they will need to re-skill or upskill massive sections of their workforce to get ready for the 4th industrial revolution. Companies can and should take on the onus of training talent by taking steps like hiring people straight out of school, employing low-code or no-code software for critical needs, and instilling cultures of continuous learning.

On top of that, the pandemic

has made many people reevaluate their jobs, leading to mass resignations in many sectors.

To attract top talent, employers must offer a working environment that is appropriate for the new world of work, including job flexibility, authentic leadership, diversity, etc.

6. Data and Device Security

Cyberattacks are on the rise, and ransomware and phishing scams are now a common occurrence. As businesses become more digital, they accumulate more data, which becomes highly attractive to cybercriminals that intend to steal it and hold organizations hostage to monetary demands.

Mobile and IoT devices are not immune to cybersecurity threats. Additionally, quantum computing is now emerging, which could render existing security systems obsolete.

7. Sustainability

Climate change is the world's largest business challenge, and consumers are demanding transparency in sustainability practices as well as more eco-friendly products and services.

Companies can respond by viewing the whole picture of their business practices and auditing their full supply chains. They should also consider switching to renewable energy, moving to more sustainable packaging, and allowing people to work remotely when appropriate which can help lower emissions.#

Excerpts from Blog sites:

1) The Benefits And Challenges Of Remote Leadership In 2023

By Benjamin Laker, Forbes

2) The 7 Biggest Business Challenges Every Company Is Facing In 2023

By Bernard Marr

From Page 1 Tech layoffs mount

Earlier this year, Canadian tech giant Shopify went through a similar reckoning. During the pandemic, CEO Tobi Lütke made a big bet that e-commerce would “leap ahead by five or even 10 years.”

Shopify doubled its headcount from early 2020 only to be forced to lay off 10 per cent of its staff this summer. “Ultimately, placing this bet was my call to make and I got this wrong,” he told staff in a memo. “As a consequence, we have to say goodbye to some of you today and I'm deeply sorry for that.... For a company like ours, this news will be difficult to digest.”

Since then, the biggest names in tech have followed suit.

But economists tracking employment levels have found those laid-off workers seem to have had little trouble finding new jobs.

“Through December, it looks like a lot of tech workers that were laid off early in the cycle have found new jobs relatively quickly,” said Aaron Terrazas, chief economist with the job search site GlassDoor.

“The tech skill set, be it engineering or data science, is incredibly valuable, and so to some

degree, we are seeing tech become a little bit less techie and traditional companies become a little bit more techie,” he said.

In fact, Canada's technology sector played a leading role in job creation last month, when professional, scientific and technical services companies added more than 100,000 jobs.

And still, Anurag Rana, a senior technology analyst with Bloomberg Intelligence says there's a dire shortage of skilled tech workers in the market right now.

Microsoft laying off 10,000 workers — about 5% of all staff

He says a big reason is it's not just traditional Silicon Valley companies that are looking to scoop up tech talent.

“Look at what happened in the U.S. with Southwest Airlines, their systems are pretty old. They just said they're going to spend a billion dollars in new technology,” Rana said in an interview this week. “So I'm not concerned that the technology trend is going to stop here or technology spending is going to stop forever. It's just a temporary pause.”

Even as the giants of Silicon Valley lay off thousands of workers,

smaller companies are struggling to find and retain tech talent.

Jennifer Reed is the senior director of talent acquisition at a software firm called Docebo, which is headquartered in Toronto. She scours the world for skilled workers to come build software that helps companies train and bring on employees.

“Even with the layoff climate that we're seeing, it's always competitive. The supply is too short for the demand,” Reed told CBC News.

The company has dozens of positions open right now ranging from product engineering to software development.

When one of the bigger companies announces it's laying off staff, email and text chains start buzzing.

“You'll see our Slack channel light up when we see a lay off, to make sure our hiring team knows so we can pounce on them,” said Ronda Morra, Docebo's global director of public relations.

That means laid-off workers have plenty of options.

Evelyn Watts was laid off from an Ottawa-based tech firm in December. She's seen this cycle play out before

“I have been in tech for 20 years, so I have been through some booms and busts. This is not my first layoff,” she said. But Watts knows some workers will be going through this process for the first time.

“For some folks, who it's their first time, it's a little jarring. But honestly, tech changes constantly. Businesses change and there's always going to be new opportunities.”

It may be counterintuitive to think of this as a time of opportunity in the tech sector. But the sector is cyclical. And as technology has seeped into every aspect of our lives, the number of companies hiring tech workers has exploded.

So, even in the midst of this wave of layoffs, tech workers have more choices and more opportunities than almost any other time in the industry's history.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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With files from Reuters

Working Together Keeps Saving the World

BY KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA
JANUARY 12, 2023 9:03 AM EST

Early in the pandemic, experts projected that the world economy could shrink by almost 10% in 2020. Yet what played out was a contraction of 3.1%—still a huge loss of output, but not nearly as dire. To a large extent, this was due to international cooperation. Countries came together to diagnose the problem: a simultaneous shock to supply and demand. This meant that standard policy responses would not be sufficient. That’s why policy-makers took extra-ordinary fiscal and monetary measures to support businesses and households. Without this coordinated response, we would have faced another Great Depression. And without the global collaboration of scientists and health authorities, we would not have had effective vaccines in record time. When crisis strikes, as it has so often in the past three years, international cooperation can save lives and livelihoods, and lay the foundations for a faster recovery.

Both the financial response and the vaccines are representative of the broader benefits of decades of economic integration and cooperation, which also helped billions of people to become healthier, wealthier, and better educated. Over the past three decades, around 1.3 billion people were lifted out of extreme poverty. To get there, we had to reach across borders. Think of trade integration, spurred by lower trade barriers and the emergence of global supply chains.

Davos 2023 - Coming together



Photo credit: Getty Images

And think of the spread of new technologies and cross-border capital flows that have underpinned much-needed investment, especially in emerging and developing economies. But this is only part of the story. The dislocations from trade and technological change have harmed some communities. Inward-looking policies and trade tensions have been on the rise for some years. And now geopolitical fragmentation is raising the specter of a “new cold war” that could see the world break into economic blocs at a cost of trillions of dollars in lost productivity.

In other words, unless we confront fragmentation, we are at risk of sleepwalking into a future that is poorer and less secure. And as we

work to overcome these divisive forces, we must focus on the most vulnerable. This includes many countries in Africa and the Caribbean that are already bearing the brunt of climate change. Should they face this challenge alone, even though others contributed so much more to the climate crisis? Or consider the growing risk of a debt crisis in emerging and developing economies. Should they face this dire fiscal situation alone, even though most are being hit by external shocks rather than domestic policy missteps?

The answer must be no. The suffering of one country can easily affect others and threaten global growth. So it’s in everyone’s interest to urgently strengthen international

cooperation on these vital issues. The IMF is founded on the principle that we are stronger together. Thanks to the collective will of our membership, we provided a record \$650 billion allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), funds that allowed many vulnerable countries to maintain access to liquidity, freeing up resources to pay for vaccines and health care. And we are now helping countries with stronger reserves to channel their SDRs to countries whose need is greater.

For example, so far we have around \$40 billion in pledges to support our new Resilience and Sustainability Trust, which will allow the IMF to provide long-term financing for the first time. Our goal is to help vulnerable low and middle-income countries build resilience against structural challenges such as climate change and pandemics. While we cannot prevent new shocks, we can bolster the resilience of our people, our communities, and our societies.

One thing is clear: we must overcome diminished trust and growing fragmentation, because no country should face these challenges alone. The pandemic showed us that we can cooperate to harness human courage, compassion, and ingenuity. And this is exactly how we can help build a better future for all people. —As told to Belinda Luscombe (TIME)

Georgieva is the managing director of the International Monetary Fund

Leaders of US, Canada, Mexico show unity despite friction

MEXICO CITY (AP) — President Joe Biden, Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sought to downplay their frustrations with one another on migration and trade as they met for the near-annual North American Leaders Summit.

The leaders offered a unified front on Tuesday despite tensions that have put a strain on their relationships even as Biden has made repairing alliances a cornerstone of his foreign policy agenda.

The tensions were front and center when Biden and López Obrador met on Monday, with the Mexican



Left to right: President Joe Biden, Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (AP Photo) president complaining of “abandonment” and “disdain” for Latin America.

But as they closed Tuesday’s summit in Mexico City with a joint news conference, the leaders offered an optimistic outlook.

“We’re true partners the three of us,” said Biden, adding that they had “genuine like” for one another. “We share a common vision for the future, grounded on common values.”

López Obrador, for his part, thanked Biden for not building “even one meter of wall,” a not so subtle dig at Biden’s Republican predecessor, Donald Trump. The warmth during their

joint press conference stood in stark contrast to the more brusque exchange a day earlier.

Still, López Obrador prodded Biden to “insist” Congress regularize undocumented Mexican migrants who work in industries where American employers are struggling mightily to find enough workers.

The three-way gathering is held most years, although there was a hiatus while Trump was president. It’s often called the “three amigos summit,” a reference to the deep diplomatic and economic ties among the countries.

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Leaders

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ONTARIO Community News

By Tony A. San Juan
OCT-Retired

Filipino-Canadian Agnes Miranda receives "2022 Asian Heroes Award"

Ms. Agnes P. Miranda, Senior Executive Vice Chairman and Co-Founder of World Financial Group (WFG) Canada and current President of the Philippine Independence Day Council (PIDC) of Toronto, Canada, prominently joined the ranks of the "2022 Asian Heroes Awardees". The awarding rites were held at the Centennial Hall of the world-famous Manila Hotel, in Manila, Philippines on November 12, 2022.

The annual Award Gala was held in celebration and recognition of

Hon. Lucas P. Bersamin, Executive Secretary and Former Supreme Court Chief Justice - "A Hero's Hero"; Senator Cynthia A. Villar - "Vanguard of Urban Environmental Rehabilitation & Social Enterprise in the Philippines"; Katrina C. Ponce Enrile - "Raising the Bar of Giving"; Justice Conchita Carpio Morales - "Incorruptible Hero of the Law"; Jose Mari Chan - "Life's Hero of Music"; Ambassador Willie B. Fernandez - "The Unconventional Diplomat Hero"; Cynthia L. Carrion Norton - "Life in Sports and Mentoring Young Athlete



Agnes Miranda with Rotarian Majella Tumangan Villaroman and co-awardee Catalina "Lina" Manarin Bagsik, "A Beautiful Hero with a Heart."

"remarkable men and women who continue to change the world with their positivity, fearless work ethic, commitment to excellence, and the sharing of kindness with grateful hearts." Ms. Maria Rosa (Bing) Nieva Carrion, the Founder, Chairman, Publisher, Resident Author, and Social Historian at Seagull Philippines, Inc., who authored and envisioned the "Asian Heroes 2022", was one of those who were recognized.

A day before the main event, the 45th Legacy or Coffee Table Book Edition was officially launched by Seagull Philippines, Inc., Total Communications Company on November 11, 2022, at the Manila Hotel, one of the oldest and most prestigious hotels in the Philippines. The ceremony was fully attended by equally successful and respected personalities at the forefront of politics, humanitarian, and business scenes in both the Philippines and entire Asia.

Agnes Miranda, the leading recipient and flaunted as a favourite of numerous organizations both locally and internationally, was awarded as "Hero of Financial Literacy and Education." She joined 49 other awardees from all over Asia. To mention a few, the Philippine honourees included Senator Loren Legarda - "Global International Champion & Maven of Philippine Indigenous Arts and Culture";

Heroes"; Dr. Jaime Aristotle B. Alip "Hero for the Eradication of Poverty"; and Dr. Enrique "Eric" A. Tayag - Undersecretary of Health "Healing with Kindness and Positivity".

The Filipino Canadian community in Toronto, Ontario has proudly extended its heartfelt congratulations to Agnes Miranda and all the awardees for their "works and vision on how they impacted our society to make a difference and make this world a better sphere to live in". Warm congratulations have been given to the award author as she fully succeeded in "presenting an inspiration of values-laden stories of these everyday heroes to serve as a shining light to young people who will comprise the next generation of leaders".

According to Bing Carrion, author of "Asian Heroes 2022", "We perceive you, heroes, as inspirations for everyone to pursue excellence and purpose. You heroes are the bedrock of our desire to mobilize a motion when halted by failures and misfortunes because you symbolize hope and assurance that someday out of this pensive mind may also come up a hero in us. "We shall leave this earth with nothing and the only defining memory we shall leave behind are the lives we have touched that change them and us forever". (Tony A. San Juan & Danny Almodal Orbillo)

The Philippines - Cradle of the most beautiful and talented women on earth

By Gus Mercado (Texas) Jan. 14, 2023

We have always known the Philippines as a cradle of beautiful and talented women, with a bounteous share of Miss Universe, Miss International and Miss World title

competing in the Miss Universe contest in New Orleans.

Last but not least, the Philippines' own Miss Philippines Celeste Cortisi who is a stunning, standout beauty from Manila is also



winners. This past year, in particular, has been a year of outstanding and world-class Filipina beauty queens!

Two Filipino-American young

competing for the Miss Universe crown in New Orleans this weekend. R'Bonney Gabriel and Celeste Cortisi aspire to follow in the footsteps of



women from Dallas and Houston won the Miss Texas title and went on to grace the world stage. Our very own

former Filipina Miss Universe crown holders Catriona Gray, Pia Wurtzback, Margie Moran and Gloria Diaz.

Journalist Joseph Lariosa asks: "Who is the fairest of them all?" From my vantage point as a Fil-Am leader from Texas, with of course a tinge of bias combined with immense pride, I declare without fear of contradiction that Filipinas are among the most beautiful women in the world. Our beauty queens are the fairest of them all.



Miss Universe 2022 winner is R'Bonney Gabriel, Miss USA outshines stiff competition R'Bonney Gabriel is the first Filipina-American in HISTORY to win both Miss USA and Miss Universe.



Averie Bishop, the first Asian-American to become Miss Texas, was head and shoulders above the other contestants in professionalism, talents, community service and grace. She advanced to the Miss America pageant finals and won very respectable 2nd Runner-Up honors. Houston's R'Bonney Gabriel easily won the Miss Texas USA title with her elegant poise, personality and natural beauty. She went on to win the highly-coveted Miss USA title and is

Minister Says Antisemites Must be Held Accountable in Ontario

TORONTO – (Jan. 16, 2023) In a thoughtful presentation made at a B’nai Brith Canada online forum last week, Ontario Education Minister Stephen Lecce acknowledged that antisemitism in the province often occurs without repercussions – and he suggested that this must change sooner rather than later.

“In Ontario,” Lecce told listeners, “we are constantly facing an uphill battle that hate against the Jewish community must be taken more seriously. There needs to be more accountability when it happens, which hasn’t been happening.”

Lecce said he and his Government deemed it important “to become a leader in Holocaust education to prevent the cycle of hate from taking root.”

The event last Wednesday night featured Lecce and other speakers as part of B’nai Brith’s work for Ontario’s Anti-Racism Directorate.

Lecce was joined by Shari Schwartz-Maltz of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), who spoke about how antisemitism occurring in elementary schools is performed by students who don’t even know what antisemitism or the Holocaust mean. She thanked Lecce for his continued



Ontario Education Minister Stephen Lecce Addressing B’nai Brith Forum

support of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.

Noah Lew, Special Advisor to the Honourable Irwin Cotler, Canada’s Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism, provided an indepth explanation to the forum of what the IHRA definition means, how it is supplied and who supports it. He reiterated how IHRA is universally accepted and the most effective

definition of antisemitism in existence.

Stephanie Wooley spoke about her organization, PFlag, and how it works to educate gay youth and families about stereotypes and discrimination. She also discussed ways to overcome the discrimination.

Lauren Manning of Life After Hate spoke about her upbringing, how she fell into joining racist communities and how she realized she had better get herself out of these communities.

“Ontario’s decision to bring Holocaust education into our schools in Grade 6 will help protect our young people from Holocaust denial and distortion,” said Michael Mostyn, Chief Executive Officer of B’nai Brith Canada. “Recent surveys in both Canada and the United States show that a disturbingly high proportion of students have little or no knowledge of the Holocaust and are susceptible to misinformation and disinformation that is so easily spread online. The Ontario Government’s plan confronts this problem head-on.”

Lecce informed the 100-plus attendees – who included trustees from the TDSB, the York Region District School Board, the Halton District School Board, the Waterloo District

School Board, representatives of the Toronto police department as well leaders of Jewish, Black and Asian organizations – that the province is rapidly moving forward on its decision announced in November to introduce Holocaust education in elementary schools.

Lecce reminded attendees that Jewish Canadians remain the most targeted religious minority for hate crimes in Canada. He said Statistics Canada reported in 2021 that police-reported hate crimes targeting Jews were up 47 per cent. He referred to a spate of antisemitic incidents in Ontario schools last year and referenced a major study on antisemitism and Holocaust knowledge conducted by Western University and Liberation75 in 2021, which indicated that 42 per cent of students surveyed said they have unequivocally witnessed an antisemitic event.

Lecce said that, to implement its first mandatory learning requirement in elementary school on Holocaust education, the Ministry of Education is actively working with the Ontario College of Teachers to develop professional learning, also known as an Additional Qualification, for teachers so they can further support efforts to educate students on the Holocaust.

“We have alerted all the other provinces and territories to Ontario’s decision to help younger students gain a deeper understanding of the significance of the Holocaust,” said Marvin Rotrand, National Director of B’nai Brith’s League for Human Rights. “The Northwest Territories has informed us that it will emulate Ontario to begin Holocaust education as of Grade 6 and we hope the other provinces will realize that, at a time of rising antisemitism, Holocaust remembrance is a key tool to combat hate aimed at Jews.”



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Hello, youth!

Dedicated to my grandchildren, to all young adults, for their unwavering zest for life.

Foreword

On January 12, 2023, India will celebrate National Youth Day (a.k.a. Yuva Diwas) and has been celebrated each year on January 12 in India since 1985. Last year's Yuva Diwas theme was: "It's all in the mind." The theme indicates that the root of any person's issues is mainly his own thoughts. The theme aims to help the individual realize that by controlling his mind better, he can improve his way of life, and the way he perceives things. Whereas from August 1 to 6, 2023, Lisbon will host the 37th World Youth Day. Originally scheduled to be held in August 2022, the Holy See announced in April 20, 2020, that it will be postponed until August 2023 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The theme of this 2023 event is "Mary arose and left with haste." (Lk 1:38).

What is it that Einstein wrote that must, and should, be the mantra of today's youth? "Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning."

How can we gain value and insight from the past? Begin by reflecting on past lessons learned for insights to create ideas to achieve a tomorrow devoid of calamities that threaten the immediate and continued existence of all creatures. To those young millennials who govern nations, big and small, their mandate is clear: comprehend what gave rise to the once-divided mighty kingdoms and monuments of past civilizations gracing the Persian and Egyptian deserts and the Cambodian and Mexican jungles; what caused the fall and the abandonment and destruction of their once-awesome and majestic work of architecture, now crumbling and dilapidated, found pell-mell in many ancient cities, such as Rome, Athens, Persepolis, Tipasa, Djemila, Volubilis, Petra, and Ephesus. Historians tell us empires fall because of corruption, conquest by external enemies, ecological catastrophes (climate change), bankruptcy, and civil wars.

The toppled temples of worship and commerce, ransacked and desecrated, are but lonely symbolic remnants of that construct of love and patience and man's delusions of grandeur. Their remaining stone

fragments resemble the debris of fallen airliners whose retrieved black boxes download compelling narratives that



Pete Guidote

often defy belief.

We all live in the aftermath of failed gestures: memorials and rituals. But, in Man, all that is left is this soft unbearable burden on the heart.

As a society, our ignorance and blindness can be incomprehensible despite years of so-called progress. Life's successes, failures, and disasters are committed not only individually but communally. But the twenty centuries separating us from the glorious rise and tragic fall of past eras should encourage us to be prudent.

How can we live for today? One way: be grateful for what we have now: the daily clean water to drink, the glow of sunset, the simple acts of kindness that come unceremoniously and unexpectedly to each of us.

From this firm resolution one can experience the gift of a quieter ego. Then peace within, not inner turmoil, becomes normal and stays whenever the ego accepts the truth of discontentment even when that thwarts the ego's desire to have more.

Spend time with people who make us happy and fulfilled. Surrounding oneself with positive, supportive people allow focus on what is going on. Don't we hang on to each other for physical and emotional survival?

Notice what's around and fully focus on what's happening at that

moment. The practice of mindful meditation is one way to live more in the now: the eternity of each moment. To two men living the same number of years, the world always provides the same sum of experiences that open doors to nature's grandeur and its beauty to enjoy. It is no surprise to know that all of nature teaches man is born for happiness.

Why does the cessation of pain bring less joy than the end of a joy causes regret? It is because in every grief we remember the happiness it deprives us of, while in the bosom of happiness it never occurs to us to think of the sorrows we are spared; it is because it is natural for us to be happy. (André Gide)

Accept things as they are (not what you want them to be). This will help let go of the things that confront us that are out of our control.

What is our best hope for tomorrow? Again, the best advantage we have, our best chance for avoiding the fate of the past societies is to learn from them, see how and why they went wrong. Were our ancestral moral and political patriarchs clever? Wise?

Take caution not to espouse panaceas that have proven to be mental traps, such as: overgeneralizing; jumping to conclusions; fortune telling; black and white reasoning; "should" reasoning; self-criticism.

Can today's new persistent problems of the human experience be solved with outgrown political and philosophical mindsets and stubborn intellectual rigidity? Should they? Once more, I quote Einstein: "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

We should ask what modern innovations have in truth become progress traps: the ones which created new problems for which society is unable or unwilling to solve or inadvertently created conditions that are worse than what existed before the innovation.

In this current decade of nuclear threats, ideological and bacteriological plagues, Einstein warned: "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought,

but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones." The history of Man's future will differ according to the decisions, individually and collectively, made today.

Ask questions -- the right questions.

"In modern thought the awareness that there is something out there that we are not yet awake enough to see is the engine that drives the investigative mind. Relentless and systematic questioning: this is the spirit of scientific intelligence. In this spirit we dissect to see what connects, we dismember to understand the whole." (James P. Carse)

Perhaps, the misfortune of our century is to have viewed virtue as unusual, while subjugation, obfuscation, and exploitation as norms. Now, more than ever, our moral standing as individuals and as a nation should both be measured by virtue, not by good fortune or circumstance. The virtues of intelligence and integrity, civic-mindedness and open-mindedness though repeatedly eclipsed over time and place are never extinguished. Idries Shah, a teacher in the Sufi tradition, wrote: "The rights that others have over you, remember them. The rights that you have over others, forget them."

It is, I believe, often necessary to review some of the past to know how well the present stands and how the future might become.

And so, finally, to this question: Who will be our best hope for tomorrow, the future?

My answer: Our children, who plead: "to respect what is most sacred in a child: the right to seek out his own truth."

Great possibilities are within each child and every child who, in the grandeur of life and youthful passion and idealism must keep saying to him/herself: "My destiny lies with me." And who must continue to ask questions, to explore, to discover until his/her final breath becomes air.

Invocation

Lord, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference. (Reinhold Niebuhr)#

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Bagong taon, bagong pagkakataon

Ang karaniwang gawain sa bagong taon ay ang pagsusulat ng mga New Year's Resolution, o ang mga layunin para sa bagong taon. May iba sa ating nagtagumpay sa kanilang pagpursigi, ngunit ayon sa mga saliksik, mas madalas maranasan ang kabiguan sa pagsubok ng mga New Year's Resolution. Halos kalahati ng lahat ng mga nagsusulat ng mga layunin para sa bagong taon ay sumasablay sa ikatlong buwan ng kanilang pagtatangka.

Ano ang dahilan sa pagkabigo? Anong pwede nating gawin upang magtagumpay? Nais kong maghandog ng mga payong galing sa "Motivational Psychology" o ang sikolohiya ng motibasyon upang magsilbing gabay sa inyong pagtatangka ng inyong iba't-ibang layunin ngayong 2023.

Ayon sa mga saliksik ni Dr. Richard Koestner, isang propesor ng motivational psychology sa McGill University, may tatlong bagay na makakatulong sa pagtagumpay sa ating mga New Year's Resolution. Una, pag-isipan ng mabuti kung ang layunin ay galing sa ating sarili, at hindi galing sa iba. Pangalawa, gumawa ng plano upang maisagawa ng kusa ang mga layunin. At pangatlo, ibahagi sa ibang mga tao ang layunin upang magkaroon ng mga taga-suporta sa pagtatangka.

Maaari ninyong maitanong na, "Kailangan ba talagang magsulat ng New Year's Resolution kung ang

karamihan nang nagtatangka ay nabibigo rin?" Ayon kay Dr. Koestner, mas maiging magsulat ng mga layunin kaysa sa magnais lamang ng pagbabago sa sarili, ngunit walang gagawin. Ang pagsusulat ng mga New Year's Resolution ay nagbibigay ng motibasyon para sa sarili upang makamit ang ating mga hinihiling o ang ating mga layunin. Sa ating paggawa nito, napagtutuunan natin ng sapat na pansin ang ating layunin, at naihananda natin ang sapat na lakas at kakayahan para sa pagpursige sa harap ng mga suliranin. Sa kanyang saliksik tungkol sa "Pagkamit ng Ating mga Layunin para sa Sarili, (Reaching One's Personal Goals)" isinulat ni Dr. Koestner na "[...] kung ipaghahambing ang dalawang grupo ng mga taong kinikilala ang kanilang mga masamang kinagawian (gaya ng paninigarilyo), mas mataas ang pagkakataon ng grupong nagsulat ng New Year's Resolution na magtagumpay sa pagbabago nitong kinagawian, kaysa sa grupo na may parehong problema at parehong ninanais na magbago, ngunit hindi nagsulat ng layunin upang magawa ito." Kadalasan, ang mga New Year's Resolution ay sinusulat para sa ikabubuti ng sarili at sa ikagagaling ng katawan. Kung ang simpleng pagsulat nito ay makakatulong sa ating makamit ang mga bagong gawi at ang ating mga hangarin, bakit hindi subukan? Walang mawawala sa atin sa paglaan ng panahon sa pagsulat ng ating mga

layunin. Baka sakaling ang mga payo sa susunod na talata ay makakatulong sa pagtagumpay.

Ngayong natuklasan na natin ang halaga ng pagsusulat ng ating mga layunin, ano ang payo ng "motivational psychology" upang tumaas ang pagkakataon nating magtagumpay? Ayon kay Dr. Koestner, ang unang dapat gawin ay ang pagsisiyasat ng sanhi ng ating mga layunin. Pagtuunan ng sapat na pansin ang layuning mismo – galing ba ito sa iyong diwa, o pinilit lang ba ito ng ibang tao? Mas mataas ang pagkakataon na magtagumpay kung galing ito sa ating sariling loob, dahil manggagaling din ang motibasyon sa ating sarili, at hindi sa iba. Pagkatapos siyasatin ang layunin, ang susunod na hakbang ay ang paggawa ng isang "mental plan" o isang espesipikong planong madaling pag-isipan. Sa planong ito, pag-isipang mabuti kung saan, kailan, at paano gagawin ang bagong kaugalian na makakatulong sa pagkamit ng iyong mga layunin. Halimbawa, sa aking sariling pagtangka sa paglikha ng isang buong dula, balak kong magsulat mula alas siyete hanggang alas diyes ng umaga, araw-araw sa aming opisina. Sa aking paggawa nitong plano, magiging kusa ang aking pagsulat dahil hindi na kinakailangan pang isipin araw-araw kung saan, kailan, at paano magtangkang tuparin ang layunin. Hindi na bibigat ang karga ng aking pag-iisip, o ang aking "mental load." Upang higit na matulungan ang sariling loob, ang huling payo ni Dr. Koestner ay ang pagbabahagi ng ating plano at layunin sa mga taong handang makinig at magbigay ng suporta. Maging maingat na hindi masyadong makikialam ang mga pipiliing taong pagsasabihan. Ang kailangang piliin ay mga taong may katulad na mga layunin. Maaaring gawin ang plano ng sabay-sabay. Ang pagtatangka sa layuning kasama ng iba ay magbibigay din ng patuloy na enganyo sa gawain. Magkakaroon din tayo ng maaasahang suporta sa harap

ng mga hindi inaasahang suliranin o pangyayari.

Bagama't tama ang intensiyon, ang pagplano, at ang pagtangkilang ng suporta ng ibang tao, huwag mawalan ng pag-asang makamit ang layunin kung sumablay sa pagsubok. Payo ni Dr. Koestner, huwag husgahan ang sarili, intindihin kung ano ang nagawang tama at kung ano ang kailangang ibahin sa susunod na pagsubok dahil mayroon tayong kasabihan, "Habang may buhay, may pag-asa." Ang isa sa mga bagay na nagdudulot ng sagwil sa pagtatangka ng mga layunin ay ang pagkukulang ng "spare will power," o ang kawalan ng labis na kakayahan. Mahirap nga namang magkaroon ng kinakailangang labis na lakas at pansin sa buwan ng Enero, kung saan ang lakas at pansin ay nahahatak ng lamig at ng lagay ng panahon. Subukang magsimula muli sa pagtatangka ng layunin sa tag-init, gaya ng buwan ng Hulyo, o sa "Canada Day" mismo. Ang huling paalala ni Dr. Koestner ay kung nakayang magtangka sa iyong layunin ng kahit isang buwan lamang, makakaya mo pa itong matagalan kung hindi sa ngayon, marahil sa susunod na pagkakataon.

Ang karamihan sa atin ay matagal nang hindi nakapagsulat ng "New Year's Resolution." Sa bagay, kagagaling lang nating lahat sa halos tatlong taong pandemya, at dalawang taong "lock-down." Kung sa ganoon, patuloy na bigyan ng panahon at ng kaunawaan ang ating sarili. Tandaan na kaya nating magbago kung tayo ay handa, kung tayo ay may labis na kakayahan, at kung nanggaling ang pagbabago sa ating sarili. Sa ating pagtatangka, huwag kalimutang gumawa ng plano na magpapadali sa pagbabagong gawi at magtangkilang ng suporta ng iba na may parehong mga layunin. At kung hindi man magtagumpay, huwag mawalan ng pag-asa, patuloy na gamitin ang natutuhan sa susunod na pagtatangka. Habang may buhay, may pag-asa. #

From Page 5

Leaders

However, the leaders have found themselves at odds, especially as they struggle to handle an influx of migrants and to crack down on smugglers who profit from persuading people to make the dangerous trip to the United States.

In addition, Canada and the U.S. accuse López Obrador of violating a free trade pact by favoring Mexico's state-owned utility over power plants built by foreign and private investors. Meanwhile, Trudeau and López Obrador are concerned about Biden's efforts to boost domestic manufacturing, creating concerns that U.S. neighbors could be left behind.

Trudeau emphasized in a one-on-one meeting with Biden the benefits of free trade and warned against Buy America policies that the U.S. administration has promoted, according to the prime minister's

office. Nearly 80% of Canada's exports go to the U.S., so avoiding protectionism remains a priority for Canada.

The key takeaways from the summit revolve around better connections among the three nations and a shared goal of a stronger North America on energy and in particular semiconductors, climate and a pledge to cut methane emissions, an agreement to manage large waves of migrants coming to the region and a more cohesive regional strategy on dealing with future pandemic-related health threats.

In their talks on Monday, López Obrador challenged Biden to improve life across the region, telling him that "you hold the key in your hand."

"This is the moment for us to determine to do away with this abandonment, this disdain, and this forgetfulness for Latin America and the

Caribbean," López Obrador said.

Biden responded by pointing to the billions of dollars that the United States spends in foreign aid around the world.

At the start of Tuesday's Biden-Trudeau meeting, the leaders spoke familiarly and with optimism. Trudeau called the U.S. president "Joe" and Biden joked with Trudeau — after the Canadian leader had delivered a statement to reporters in English and French — that he should have paid more attention in his college French classes.

Biden and Trudeau also discussed their countries' efforts to support Ukraine nearly 11 months after Russia's invasion. Canada announced Tuesday that it would buy an American-made National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System, or NASAMS, to be donated to Ukraine. The medium-range ground-based air defense system, which protects

against drone, missile and aircraft attacks, costs about \$406 million and brings Canada's contribution to Ukraine to more than \$1 billion since the start of the war.

The White House said in a statement that the leaders also discussed "the generational opportunity to strengthen supply chains for critical minerals, electric vehicles, and semiconductors." The U.S. administration also announced that Biden will make his first visit to Canada as president in March.

"There's a lot of reasons to be optimistic, especially for those of us in our countries," Trudeau said. "But it's going to take a lot of work, something neither you or I or most our citizens have ever been afraid of."

Biden and López Obrador haven't been on particularly good terms for the past two years. The Mexican leader made no secret of his

See Page 12

Leaders

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OLD FASHION BEEF STEW

INGREDIENTS
Yield: 4 servings
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 pound beef stewing meat, trimmed and cut into inch cubes
5 teaspoons vegetable oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 cup red wine
3 1/2 cups beef broth, homemade or low-sodium canned
2 bay leaves
1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
5 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch rounds
2 large baking potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch cubes
2 teaspoons salt

PREPARATION
Step 1
Combine the flour and pepper in a bowl, add the beef and toss to coat well. Heat 3 teaspoons of the oil in a large pot. Add the beef a few pieces at a time; do not overcrowd. Cook, turning the pieces until beef is browned on all sides, about 5 minutes

per batch; add more oil as needed between batches.
Step 2
Remove the beef from the pot and add the vinegar and wine. Cook over medium-high heat, scraping the pan with a wooden spoon to loosen any browned bits. Add the beef, beef broth and bay leaves. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a slow simmer.
Step 3
Cover and cook, skimming broth from time to time, until the beef is tender, about 1 1/2 hours. Add the onions and carrots and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes. Add the potatoes and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes more. Add broth or water if the stew is dry. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Ladle among 4 bowls and serve.



Slow Cooker Beef Stew With Maple and Stout

INGREDIENTS
Yield: 8 servings
3 large carrots, peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks

2 large parsnips, peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks
2 large russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks
3 thyme sprigs
2 rosemary sprigs
3 to 3 1/2 pounds chuck roast, excess fat trimmed, cut into 2-inch chunks
1/3 cup stout beer
1/3 cup maple syrup, preferably dark
4 garlic cloves, chopped
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
3 teaspoons balsamic vinegar, preferably aged
Kosher salt and black pepper

PREPARATION
Step 1
Combine the carrots, parsnips, potatoes, herbs, beef, beer, maple syrup, garlic, onion and garlic powders and 1 teaspoon vinegar in a 5- to 8-quart slow cooker. Season with 2 teaspoons salt and a generous amount of pepper. Mix well to combine (feel free to use your hands). Cook on low until the meat and vegetables are very tender, 10 to 12 hours, stirring the stew once if possible; this helps the beef and vegetables cook more evenly, but if it's not possible, it will be fine.
Step 2
Remove and discard the herb sprigs. Stir in the remaining 2 teaspoons vinegar. Taste and add more salt and pepper if you like. Serve in shallow bowls with the meat, vegetables and some sauce.
Tip
If you have extra time, brown the meat before you start cooking for a richer, more complex flavor: Season it with salt, then work in two batches, searing the meat in 2 tablespoons vegetable oil over high heat. Transfer the meat to the slow cooker, and add a few spoonfuls of water or broth to the pan, and scrape up the browned bits. Add those to the slow cooker, too.



Potato Leek Soup

Ingredients
3 tbsp. olive oil
3 tbsp. unsalted butter
3 medium russet potatoes (about 2 1/4 lb.), peeled and chopped
3 leeks, white and light green parts only, thinly sliced
3 celery stalks, chopped, plus yellow leaves for garnish (optional)
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
6 c. chicken broth
6 sprigs fresh thyme
1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
3/4 tsp. ground black pepper, plus more to taste
1 c. heavy cream, plus more for drizzling
Hot sauce and fried onions, optional

Directions
1 In a medium Dutch oven, heat the oil and butter over medium heat. Add the potatoes, leeks and celery. Cook, stirring, until the leeks are tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
2 Stir in the chicken broth, thyme sprigs, salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, uncovered, until the potatoes are tender, 15 to 20 minutes.
3 Remove the thyme sprigs. Transfer about 4 cups of the soup to a blender. Remove the top insert from the lid and cover with a kitchen towel. Puree until smooth, 30 seconds. Add to Dutch oven with the remaining chunky soup. Stir in the cream and cook over medium-low heat, stirring, until the soup is slightly thickened, 10 to 15 minutes.
4 Season the soup with more salt and pepper. Garnish with celery leaves, hot sauce, prepared fried onions and another drizzle of heavy cream, if you like.

How should I prep leeks for potato leek soup?
For starters, make sure you wash them first. After thinly slicing the leeks, put them in a bowl full of water and swish them around with your hands. The leeks should float to the surface of the water, while the dirt falls to the bottom of the bowl. Scoop them out and pat them dry with a towel before using.#

From Page 9 Leaders

admiration for Trump, and last year he skipped a Los Angeles summit of the Americas because Biden didn't invite the authoritarian leaders of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua.

But despite the tension, there's been cooperation. The U.S. and Mexico have also reached an agreement on a major shift in migration policy, which Biden announced last week.

Under the plan, the U.S. will send 30,000 migrants per month from Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti and Venezuela back across the border from among those who entered the U.S. illegally. Migrants who arrive from those four

countries are not easily returned to their home countries for a variety of reasons.

In addition, 30,000 people per month from those four nations who get sponsors, background checks and an airline flight to the U.S. will be able to work legally in the country for two years.

The number of migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border has risen dramatically during Biden's first two years in office. There were more than 2.38 million stops during the year that ended Sept. 30, the first time the number topped 2 million.

López Obrador spoke at length about Mexico's efforts to control the flow into the United States of

fentanyl, the synthetic opioid that has become a scourge for many American communities. He noted that his government gave the military control of sea ports to help with the interdiction of precursor chemicals coming from Asia.

"We are battling fentanyl, these chemicals, and we are doing it because we care. No human is foreign to us," he said. "It really matters to us to be able to help with what is happening in the United States, the deaths from fentanyl. But also as we discussed today, it is not only an issue for the United States, because if we don't confront this problem, this scourge, we are going to suffer it, too. So we have to act in a coordinated

way."

Canada is being nudged by the U.S. and other allies to lead an international mission to Haiti to help solve the ongoing humanitarian and security crisis.

Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry and the country's Council of Ministers sent an urgent appeal Oct. 7 calling for "the immediate deployment of a specialized armed force, in sufficient quantity" to stop the crisis caused partly by the "criminal actions of armed gangs." But more than three months later, no countries have stepped forward.

Trudeau on Tuesday called the

See Page 13 Leaders



Social Tidbits

Montreal Community News

Fely Rosales Cariño

Guys, it's winter, we might as well enjoy it! Some take delight in the white fluffy snow as it falls tenderly. Let's try to take in stride the slush, freezing rain, blowing snow etc. For in a few months, we will say hello to spring. Some of us stay home and remain cozy by the fireplace or just read a good book. Or watch your favorite sports, walk some short distance, or simply venture outside. Then you'll say it's not bad after all. Get active, do chair yoga, or happy walking!

December socials aren't finished with the end of December 2022. The Quebec Association of Canadian Filipino Teachers (QACFT) had their Christmas Party last December 9 at 6767 Côte-des-Neiges. Contrary to expectation, the place was filled with members we haven't seen in ages during meetings or activities. QACFT President Bing Estopa prepared a program that interested everyone. Topping it was the fun game 'Trip to Jerusalem'. Food was in abundance. The Induction of Officers was a necessary part of the program. For 2022-2024, here are the officers: Elvira Estopa (President), Fely Rosales-Carino (VP, Admin), Elsa Montealegre (VP Finance), Joseph V. Gonzalez (Secretary), Carmen Caro (Secretary), Larina Flores (Treasurer), Nancy Castillo (Auditor), Melanie Somejo (Director of Membership), Lea Baldeovar (Director of Educational Services), Esphie Manaoag (Director of Youth and Sports), Jeannette Perignon (Director of Communication), Iluminada Averion (Director of Referral and Legal Documentation). Inducting officer was the ever pretty Stephanie Valenzuela, City Councillor of Côte-Des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-De-Grâce Darlington borough.

The group also paid attention to the poignant reminder of the passing of a great teacher last November 12, 2022. Mrs. Lydia Fielding paid Trans Liganor a loving tribute mentioning all her educational achievements, her sports (bowling)

superiority, and her all-around much-loved personality as a person. Trans was a former President of the Philippines Benevolent Society and Scholarship of Quebec (PBSSQ) and the QCAFT. She was a mainstay in numerous Filipino gatherings. Loyal and hardworking, she loved people and we all loved her in return.

The Knights of Rizal (KOR) commemorated the 126th martyrdom of Dr. Jose Rizal, the Philippine National Hero. Along with it was the KOR Knighting Ceremony. It was held at Ruby Rouge in Chinatown last December 20, 2022. This was sponsored by the KOR, Eastern Canada Region, a civic, patriotic, cultural, non-partisan, non-sectarian, and non-profit organization.

Listed as the Degree Team are Sir Dario Boco (KGOR, LM, Regional Commander), Sir Felix De Luna (KGOR, LM, Deputy Regional Commander), Sir James de La Paz (KGOR, LM, Regional Chancellor), Sir Reynaldo Balansi (KGOR, LM, Region Pursuivant), Sir Alberto Abiera (KGOR, LM Region Archivist), and Sir Gerry Danzil (KGOR, LM, Area 1 Commander). Knighted were the following: Alain Charbonneau, David Alan Beasse, Rafael Basilan, and Arturo Summayo. Elevated to 2nd Degree were Sir Councillor Sonny Moroz (KR), Sir Alfonso Abdon (KR), and Sir Louis Jose Klein (KOR). This was followed by the Chartering of Snowdon Chapter and Induction of Chapter Officers. This was led by Sir Reymundo Lastra (CKR, LM, Chapter Commander) entertained with an impressive program. It began with the Entrance of Colors with Sir Hadjal Gattoc (KCR, LM), Sir Stephan Morin (KCR, LM), and Sir Francisco Bernabe Jr. (KCR, LM) carrying the flags. The national anthems were performed by Sir Edmour Valdez and Sir Julius Abad (KCR, LM, Area 2 Deputy Commander) singing Lupang Hinirang. The wreath laying was led by MNA for Mont-Royal-Outrement Michelle Setlakwe. Sir Dario Boco welcomed the guests. The

following did very well in inspiring everyone with their messages: MNA Michelle Setlakwe, Sir Councilor Sonny Moroz, and Sir Bert Abiera. Sir Felix De Luna gave the closing remarks. The dinner was punctuated with dance numbers. Master of Ceremonies Sir James de la Paz made the party a lively one. Of course, there were important messages sent by MP Sir Anthony Housefather, Sir Gerardo Calderon (KGCR, Supreme Commander), Marvin Rotrand (National Director, League for Human Rights), and Sir Jose Damasco (KGOR, Adviser to Canada Regions).

Before leaving the Jose Rizal Chapter, let me tell you that there are now Knight of Rizal Chapters, listed here with the respective commanders: Montreal Chapter (Sir Hector Racuya), West Island Chapter (Sir Hadjal Gattoc), Notre-Dame-de-Grace Chapter (Sir Stephan Morin), and Snowdon Chapter (Sir Ray Mundo Lastra). The following Chapters such as the Mackenzie Central Chapter, Gatineau Chapter, Maharlika Chapter, and Magtanggol Chapter have as their commanders Sir Ramon Posadas and Sir Julius Abad.

Not to be missed is the potluck Christmas Party thrown by the Seniors of West Island and Suburbs (SWIS). As usual, everyone brought a hearty dish. This was followed by the usual bingo. This was held at the DDO Chalet on Spring Gardens and everyone enjoyed the get together! Not content with the Christmas Party at the Chalet, they followed this up with a sumptuous breakfast at one of the eateries at Marche de l'Ouest. Way to go, SWIS Officers and members! By the way, members are super-friendly and thoughtful. They remembered members who couldn't attend because of health issues. They were sent a fruit basket with signed cards. WOW! Thanks for MY fruit basket! You all have a heart. It brightened my week and warmed my heart and added much to the Christmas spirit. Thanks to my Christmas postal messenger, Nene Isada!

Before I forget, let me refresh your memory of the Annual Christmas Party by the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM) officers and members led by Chairman Al Abdon held at Jacques & Jeannette's residence. Members trekked to their place with Christmas goodies. According to Valent Lloyd Hughes, they had so much fun doing the Karaoke and singing Christmas songs accompanied by Edith Fedaliso. This is an annual Christmas party attended by the same people at the same place

every year. A big thank you to Jacques and Jeannette for your generous hospitality.

Finally here's an update of our participation on the B'nai Brith zoom call held on January 11, 2023. This 7pm meeting was organized by Marvin Rotrand, the National Director of B'nai Brith's League of Human Rights. We all know Marvin as a close friend to Filipinos and always includes us in his endeavors. The Keynote Speaker was Honourable Stephan Lecce, Ontario Minister of Education, who spoke in Ontario's recent decision to begin Holocaust Education in Grade Six. The Minister was joined by Honourable Irwin Cotler, former Minister of Justice, Attorney General of Canada, now our Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism. Many participated during the question period which shed light on many issues. Again, many thanks to Marvin Rotrand for this enlightening session.

Well, Happy New Year everyone! Have you made your New Year's Resolutions yet? I know of no better way than to start 2023 with encouraging Bible passages to deepen your faith, strengthen your love, and increase your hope for a brighter tomorrow. Isaiah 43:18 says, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past." Lamentations 3:22-24 says, "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is His faithfulness. I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion; therefore, I will wait for Him.'" Finally, Hebrews 4:16 says, "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

See you next issue and God Bless You all!

From Page 12

Leaders

situation "heartbreaking." Both he and Biden said they will work with the United Nations Security Council to assist the Caribbean nation but also expressed caution about direct intervention.

"We need to make sure that the solutions are driven by the people of Haiti themselves," Trudeau said.

Associated Press writers Mark Stevenson and Maria Verza in Mexico City; Rob Gillies in Toronto; and Aamer Madhani, Chris Megerian and Josh Boak in Washington contributed to this report. #

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FILIPINO STAR

SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Christian Bautista celebrates 20 years in showbiz



Christian Bautista

A TV stint and a singing contest on a national scale meant the world to a young Christian Bautista. And what followed had him leading a fruitful and triumphant 20 years of career in the music scene.

After going home as a grand finalist in the first season of "A Star in a Million" in 2004, Christian Bautista got his hands on a singing gig that he thought would go well, only to be welcomed by vacant seats and empty tables. Right there and then, he realized that it takes a lot more than ballads, sweat, and tears to tug and

win over the heartstrings of many.

"It made me realize that this is also hard to work, that I really have to work really hard if I really want to pursue this career," Bautista said.

Burning the candle at both ends for two decades had proved worthwhile as Asia's Romantic Balladeer welcomed 2023 honoring his 20th year in show business. And as part of his celebration, he plays back some memories that defined his enduring career as a singer and an actor.

Love for Music

Before we fell in love with his music, he first fell in love with it. By the time he laid eyes on the Trumpets' musical production of C. S. Lewis's classic children's novel, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, during his childhood years, he knew that there was another world out there waiting for him.

"It really changed my perspective, and I wanted to perform professionally after that," Bautista said.

He had poured his heart out in his children's choir in their church, playing and performing with his friends, letting his singing potential grow over time. And when opportunity waved at the horizon in the form of a reality show, he made the most of it.

"It really changed my life because I saw how happy my family was here and abroad when they saw me perform on TV, and I will never forget the happiness that they felt and how I felt as well," Bautista said when asked how monumental joining *Star in a Million* was for him.

Even though he didn't snatch the coveted crown, he became one of the most celebrated contestants on the TV show. He was given a recording contract, a song, and a self-titled album a year after placing 4th in the singing contest. "The Way You Look at Me," his first hit single that serenaded the Philippines and overseas, made him believe he would go places.

"The album, when they released the other songs and music videos, did well as well. And it solidified my thinking that I had finally found my purpose."

The 41-year-old singer and songwriter had released more than ten albums, in which he strived to spare no effort to develop his craft. He collaborated with big stars such as Martin Nievera and Ogie Alcasid in his third studio album *Captured* and worked with Jim Brickman, Singaporean producer-arranger Tat Tong, K-Pop R&B trio One Way for Wrong Number, and Japanese singer Baby M for his first international album, *Outbound*.

Exploring the industry

Seeing the vaster horizon waiting for him, he started exploring different ventures that would allow him to grow as an up-and-coming media personality.

He had endorsed brands such as the San Miguel Corporation Asia, Bench, Blackwater, Skechers,

Swatch, and Smart Communications.

He also starred in movies and TV, including *Mano Po: 5*, his film debut, and *The Kitchen: Musical*, where he played the lead role alongside fellow musician Karylle.

He had transcended in musicals like *the Ghost: The Musical*, where he played the protagonist Sam Wheat, and the first Asian adaptation of the Tony Award-winning musical *Jersey Boys*, where the singer took the role of American singer Bob Gaudio.

"I love doing musical theater. I also enjoyed my time acting on TV or in film," the singer said. "But right now, I would like to really focus on other business ventures as well, aside from still doing my best in showbiz."

Maintaining a long-lasting career in the industry is a remarkable feat for *The Clash* judge.

"It was a wonderful roller coaster ride. I say that all the time because there are highs and there are lows, but the challenge is always exhilarating, and the climb and the process is always exhilarating, especially when you are rewarded."

There is no better way to celebrate a special milestone than to commemorate it with the people who followed you through your journey. A love letter to his fans, catch his upcoming concert "The Way You Look At Me: The Concert," on Jan. 28 at the Samsung Performing Arts Theater, Circuit Makati.

"I love singing to people,



making them feel good, feel loved, and happy. I really love singing to an audience, so it was really tough during a pandemic when I didn't have a live audience, but when the live audiences were back, it felt really good again." ■

Manny Pacquiao, Jinkee share glimpse of sprawling mansion in General Santos City



Manny and Jinkee Pacquiao

path, and in front of their well-manicured gardens.

“Let our lives be full of both thanks and giving,” she wrote. Jinkee first unveiled the Pacquiaoos’ new mansion in General Santos City in December 2022, when it was still under construction. She also shared glimpses of the house’s high ceilings, massive kitchen, and sprawling porch.



Manny and Jinkee were last spotted in South Korea in December of last year, where they dined with South Korean actor



Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao and his wife Jinkee recently shared a glimpse of one of their lavish homes in General Santos City where they have been taking up residence whenever they are in Mindanao.

On their respective Instagram posts, the Pacquiao couple shared pictures of their sprawling mansion, with its cream-colored motif and

contemporary design.

“Enjoying an afternoon walk with my better half @jinkeepacquiao,” said Manny in the caption.

Jinkee, on the other hand, talked about living a life filled with gratitude as she shared more photos of their GenSan abode.

The couple were snapped against the facade of their house with its driveway, before a stone



Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.15*

Erik Santos reunites with Sarah Geronimo, Rachelle Ann Go

**Sarah Geronimo, Erik Santos, Rachelle Ann Go.**

Erik Santos has marked 20 years of friendship with showbiz pals Sarah Geronimo and Rachelle Ann Go.

Santos has reunited with his fellow "ASAP Natin 'To" champions Geronimo and Go at a private restaurant in Taguig City, as seen on his personal Instagram

account on Friday, Jan. 20..

Go, who is pregnant with her second child with husband Martin Spies, also shared snippets of their intimate gathering on her Instagram page on Saturday, Jan. 21. The London-based singer is currently in the Philippines for a short stay. ■

Ina Raymundo thanks honest taxi driver for returning her son's phone

**Ina Raymundo with Mike, the taxi driver who returned her son's phone.**

Actress Ina Raymundo started the year grateful as she thanked a taxi driver for bringing back her son's phone.

In her Instagram account, Ina posted a photo of her with the taxi driver named Mike.

"Maraming salamat, Mike, driver ng RMJJ taxi! My son left his cellphone in his car but he returned it to us," Ina wrote in the caption.

"Nakakatuwa at may mga

tao pa talaga na may ginintuang puso. Pinaganda mo ang pagpasok ng 2023 namin. May God bless you always," she added.

She also posted the wedding clips of her and her husband, Brian, taken 20 years ago.

She referred to the father of her kids as the "my answered prayer."

Dolly de Leon gets Oscar snub for Best Supporting Actress award

**Dolly De Leon**

Filipina actress Dolly de Leon has failed in her bid to be nominated for Best Supporting Actress at the 95th Academy Awards on Tuesday, January 24.

The nominees for Best Supporting Actress, which were announced on the Oscars' official YouTube channel, include Angela Bassett ("Black Panther: Wakanda Forever"), Hong Chau ("The Whale"), Kerry Condon ("The Banshees of Inisherin"), Jamie Lee Curtis ("Everything Everywhere All At Once"), and Stephanie Hsu ("Everything Everywhere All At Once").

De Leon gained critical acclaim for her portrayal as cleaner and "toilet manager" Abigail in Ruben Ostlund's Palme d'Or-winning satire "Triangle of Sadness," where she was nominated for Best Supporting Actress at the Golden Globe Awards and the British Academy

Film Awards.

Still, her film "Triangle of Sadness" had been nominated for Best Picture.

De Leon was also previously snubbed at the 2023 Screen Actors Guild Award nominations, often regarded as a major precursor for the Academy Awards with the Outstanding Cast winner often going on to win the Oscar for Best Picture and winning actors replicating their honors.

Artists with Filipino heritage that have been nominated at the Oscars include actress Hailee Steinfeld, cinematographer Matthew Libatique, makeup artist Frederic Aspiras, visual effects pioneer Ariel Velasco-Shaw, and filmmakers Ronnie del Carmen, Pia Clemente, Trevor Jimenez and Bobby Pontillas.

The Oscars awards night is scheduled on Sunday, March 12, to be hosted by Jimmy Kimmel. ■

No room for complacency in Boy Abunda's TV comeback



Boy Abunda

While he has an “extremely competent” team behind him in his television comeback, veteran host Boy Abunda isn’t about to just sit back and relax. His bosses put too much trust in him, he said, for him not to do his best and deliver what’s expected of him.

So, to make sure that his new GMA Network show, “Fast Talk with Boy Abunda,” gets a fighting chance in the daily afternoon slot, Boy tapped into his broad network of show biz contacts and made some calls.

“Nagtawag talaga ako. Nakiusap ako. I want my show to work, so I want to have the biggest stories in my first week. I’m not going to depend on my staff,” Boy said at a recent press conference.

The 20-minute show, which premiered last Jan. 23, is described as a “multiplatform” concept that features commentaries and rundowns of latest show biz happenings” and exclusive interviews with celebrities.

Last Monday, Boy sat down with Marian Rivera; Tuesday, with Glaiza de Castro and husband, David Rainey. Also gracing the show are Alden Richards (Wednesday), Bea Alonzo (Thursday) and Paolo Contis (Friday).

“I called up Marian’s management office. I called Shirley Kuan to negotiate Bea’s guest appearance in the show. I spoke directly to Alden, whom I fondly call Richard. I spoke to Popoy Caritativo to get Carla Abellana for a future episode. I jokingly told Paolo that he can’t not say yes to me,” he related.

“I’m working with a great

team, but I’m not going to just sit down,” he added. “Mataas ang energy ko, makikialam ako, I warned them, because I want to deliver.”

Copyright protected

Of course, one of the show’s highlights is his signature “fast talk” in which he fires oftentimes cheeky questions answerable only by yes or no.

“Calling the show ‘Fast Talk’ was a brilliant idea by one of the writers. That’s my brand, after all; that’s who I am to younger viewers. When they see me, the first thing that comes to mind is either ‘Sex or chocolates?’ or ‘Lights on or lights off?’” Boy said. After all, he already had the term “fast talk” copyright protected, he revealed. “I thought it was a brilliant idea ... I have ownership of that. Eh bakit pa nga tayo magpapaliguy-ligoy pa? I want to use an element that’s my own.”

But they had to give this segment a new twist. “We have to step up in the way we do it. The questions we ask should be personal to the guest. The fun things about it is that there’s no mold,” he said.

In the age of social media, the celebrities themselves have become the bringer of news, may it be good, trivial or controversial. And everyone else has become “a reporter, commentator, and spectator all at once.” This time, Boy hopes to set the agenda.

Centerpiece

“We will try to make the headlines. We know that social media has become the primary source of stories, but we won’t stop chasing them. You never know, baka makatisod tayo ng storya ... We have

access to personal friends, artists,” Boy said. “The last part of the show, the interview, is where I’m strong. That’s the centerpiece.” One advantage of being on television or mainstream media is access to meticulous fact-checking processes. “The news or headlines we tackle will go through several people. Only then can I do my commentary,” he pointed out.

It would be bold of him to claim that the program concept will work especially in its timeslot. But Boy is no stranger to the

uncertainties and jitters that come with taking risks. “It will be hard because we’re already used to seeing dramas in the afternoon,” he said. “So we will be knocking on your households, asking if we can borrow 20 minutes of your time.”

“Is it going to work? I can’t say that. But I’m willing to listen and I’m open. It’s something new; you’re reintroducing yourself. You have to start somewhere. And I’m not going to wait for manna from heaven to fall down,” he said. ■

Rabiya Mateo buys house for family in Iloilo



Rabiya Mateo

Miss Universe Philippines 2020 Rabiya Mateo was overjoyed when she finally saw for herself the new house that she purchased for her family in her hometown in Iloilo.

The Kapuso actress took to her Instagram account on Sunday, Jan. 22 to share a glimpse of the new property that she bought for her loved ones.

“Hey guys, nandito ako ngayon sa labas ng kakabili kong bahay para sa pamilya ko sa Iloilo,” Mateo said in the video. “And I’m kinda getting emotional kasi if parang looking back then, it was so impossible for us to get [our own] property.”

(Hey guys, I am currently here at the house that I just bought for my family in Iloilo. And I’m kinda getting emotional because looking back then, it was so impossible for us to get our own property.)

Mateo also admitted that buying her own house is a big deal for her, since her family used to rent their own place.

“Nagre-rent lang kami, no permanent address din, naka-ilang lipat din kami. Kaya God has been so good to me, God has been so good to my family,” she added.

(We used to rent our place. We didn’t have a permanent address as well, and we kept on switching locations. This is why God has been so good to me. God has been so good to my family.)

As a breadwinner, the former

beauty queen hoped that her new home would inspire others to work hard for their families.

“Alam ko mahirap, especially minsan nakakapagod din na maraming taong umaasa sa ‘yo... but [it can be a] fuel to strive harder talaga kasi ang sarap sa feeling to be able to provide sa mga taong mahal mo,” she said.

(I know it’s hard, especially if there are many people who rely on you. But it can also be a fuel to strive harder since it feels so nice to provide for your loved ones.)

Mateo also expressed gratitude to her fellow GMA stars, the Miss Universe Philippines (MUPh) organization, as well as the representatives of her brand endorsements, for helping her achieve her dreams in the caption.

Fellow celebrities including comedienne Pokwang, Kapuso stars Gabbi Garcia and Faith Da Silva, MUPh national director Shamcey Supsup, Miss Universe Philippines 2021 Beatrice Luigi Gomez, and Miss Grand International 2020 first runner-up Samantha Bernardo congratulated Mateo on her newest milestone.

Mateo represented the Philippines at the Miss Universe 2020 pageant, where she eventually finished as a Top 20 finalist.

The beauty queen went on to sign a contract with GMA Artist Center to debut as an actress in November 2021. ■

Archives show that Canada's first Filipino immigrant arrived in 1861



On the left is Ben Flores, beside a young girl. From the Bowen Island archives. Photo: Cathy Bayly / Bowen Island Museum and Archives

By Rodge Cultura

Ben Flores was in Canada six years before Canada formally became a constitutional monarchy.

A Filipino-Canadian in Vancouver, B.C. was digging through the archives when he learned the story of Benjamin Flores, better known as Ben or Benson, after his name turned up as someone who had lived in Canada back in the 1860s. The unmarked resting place of Ben Flores, who died in 1929, can be found in a cemetery in Vancouver, B.C. His grave was discovered following an investigation by Joseph Lopez, a radio host and journalist in Vancouver, who is convinced that Ben Flores was Canada's first Filipino immigrant, according to records.

Nobody thought about him for a long time. He died alone, said Lopez. Flores's grave is in the Horne section of Mountain View Cemetery between 31st and 33rd Avenue in Vancouver. His interment is confirmed by the records at the office of the cemetery manager.

There is no headstone at Ben Flores's grave at Mountain View. Flores was buried in the Vancouver

cemetery several miles from Bowen Island, where he had lived for a long time. The island is about 30 km from where he was buried.

A hand-drawn map discovered by archivist Catherine Bayly from Bowen Island Museum and Archives shows Flores's name and indicates that he had lived on the island in Snug Cove.

Ben Flores's former home is just a few metres from a row of berthed yachts.

Ben Flores had the reputation of being friendly. In an audio recording, George Dorman, a [former] neighbour of Flores, described the Filipino fisherman as a close friend.

"Ben Flores was a coloured man and he was my best friend. I don't know anyone quite like him. He was a really good friend. He was a true friend—he was generous, giving—all the time that we worked together. He was a really good person, according to Bayly's transcription of the audio recording.

"From what I know, he was a Filipino—from the Philippine Islands. He was a fisherman. They often sailed



Photo of the float house of Ben Flores on the shores of Snug Cove, Bowen Island, British Columbia PHOTO: BOWEN ISLAND MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

on old windjammers and came down here to see our beautiful city, and they would go fishing. I still have a photo of old Ben's boat filled with 25 passengers," according to the transcript of the audio recording that Bayly sent.

In June 2022, Bowen Island Museum and Archives posted on their social media page that David Collings, a summer archival assistant, had found the exact spot where the photo from 1914 had been taken, which even showed Flores's dwelling by the shore. Finding the first immigrant Lopez's intention in visiting Bowen Island back in 2010 was to climb Mount Gardner, and it was then that he learned about

Flores by accident.

"I heard [a conversation] on the bus that it was great to climb the highest peak of Mount Gardner on Bowen Island. I said, 'What's on Bowen Island anyway?' I went that weekend," Lopez said.

He dropped in at the public library while he was on the island. "I borrowed a book from the library to learn about the history of the island that I was exploring. They told me, 'Here's the book, Bowen Island.'" Then on one page, it mentioned [someone] from the Philippines and there was a name ... so I was surprised. [Because] I had read before that the first Filipinos

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From Page 18 First Filipino
had arrived in the 1930s," he said.

Lopez's journey of discovering the identity of Canada's first Filipino immigrant to Canada had begun. Irene Howard's book, *Bowen Island: 1872-1972*, mentions the name of Ben Flores, along with two others said to have come from the Philippines who were residing on the island. "Ben Flores had a float house in Snug Cove, Bowen Island, and liked to play the concertina and sing. He was a fisherman, a beachcomber, a trapper and operated the first boat rentals, as Bowen Island was increasingly becoming a tourist destination from folks in Vancouver (called Gastown or Granville before 1886)," the book states.

Apart from the float house, it was said that Flores also owned land in a section of District Lot 1426, located at the foot of Mount Gardner on the island. What Lopez read pushed him to gather more information from the sources. Lopez scoured the Canada's census records from 1825, checked the archives and researched records about the first groups of Filipinos who

lived in Canada. See: Record of Ben Flores from Library and Archives Canada

According to notes in the 1911 Census of Canada from the archives, Flores arrived in Canada in 1861. However, there is no specific date of his arrival. The census states that Flores was born in May 1846, was Catholic and was a bachelor. This means that he was only 15 years old when he arrived in Canada in 1861. He was 65 years old and was living on Bowen Island when this census was taken.

The record for the year of Flores's immigration states that he was living in the British Columbia even before the British North American Act, also known as the Constitution Act, was passed and came into effect in 1867, which established a constitutional monarchy.

It appears that Ben (Benjamin/Benson Flores) was the first Filipino immigrant who arrived and lived in British Columbia and the first immigrant in Canada with Filipino ancestry. The recorded year of Flores's immigration is the earliest record of anyone with Filipino ancestry living in

Canada, according to Lopez's research. "As a journalist, I want to set the record straight. The encyclopedia is wrong," says Lopez with conviction. "It took a while because there were many who arrived in those days. And I had to look at the records. Sometimes, they weren't available online and I had to rely on paper [documents]."

Many studies state that Filipino immigration to Canada started in the 1960s. However, this was changed thanks to the documents Lopez found in the Canada's archives.

Filipino immigration to Canada in the 1800s began even earlier than many had assumed. This was despite strict Canadian immigration policies and restrictions on the entry of Asians at that time.

The story of Ben Flores and of the Filipinos who lived on the West Coast of Canada are mentioned in Filipinos in Canada, by Jon Malek, which was published recently as booklet 38 in the Immigration and Ethnicity in Canada Series by the Canadian Historical Association. In particular, documents and photographs showing the life of Flores on Bowen Island are included.

Lopez is convinced that he has found the first Filipino immigrant in Canada on record. However, he says it's still possible that new names will be found deep in the archival records.

"Who knows, someone may find another name. There are 90,000 names in the census. Someone may find an even earlier [year of immigration]." There is no record of Flores leaving Canada. He died of chronic inflammation of the bladder and kidney. The death certificate lists his year of birth as 1848 and his date of death at age 81 as April 11, 1929, at Vancouver General Hospital.

Lopez suggests that it would be more justifiable to recognize 1846 rather than 1848 as his year of birth based on the 1911 Census of Canada, contrary to what is stated on the death certificate.

Lopez believes that Flores died at the age of 82. He had no children. He never married and had no relatives in B.C., a fact known to those who knew him when he died.

Posted: November 30, 2022 15:59
This report is translated from Tagalog
Rodge Cultura

\$2.8-billion settlement reached in class-action lawsuit over residential schools

Suit was filed in 2012 over destruction of language and culture caused by residential school system

CBC News · Posted: Jan 21, 2023 12:27 PM EST Officials announced Saturday that the federal government and 325 First Nations have agreed to settle a class-action lawsuit, seeking reparations for the loss of language and culture brought on by Indian residential schools, for \$2.8 billion.

The agreement still has to be approved by a Federal Court before it can be disbursed to recipients, who filed the claim for collective compensation in 2012 as part of a broader class action known as the *Gottfriedson* case.

Canada agreed to pay the \$2.8 billion of settlement money into a new trust fund that will operate for 20 years, if the court approves the deal. The fund will be run independent of the federal government, according to officials.

The fund organization will be governed by a board of nine Indigenous directors, of whom Canada will choose one, the agreement says.

"While settlements like those announced today ... do not make up for the past, what it can do is address the collective harm caused by Canada's past," said Marc Miller, the minister for Crown-Indigenous relations, at a Vancouver event Saturday morning. "The loss of language, the loss of culture and heritage."

Miller noted that this was the first time bands specifically were being compensated, with the funds set to support the four pillars of revival, protection, promotion and wellness of Indigenous languages and cultures.

Plaintiffs in the case, which was initially filed by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and shíshálh Nation in



Marc Miller, minister for Crown-Indigenous relations, speaks at a news conference on Saturday. He said there was a 'heck of a lot more to do' when it came to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. (Yasmin Gandham/CBC)

British Columbia, developed a disbursement plan for the funds, according to officials.

The *Gottfriedson* case is named after a former B.C. regional chief, Shane Gottfriedson, who filed it alongside shíshálh band councillor Gary Feschuk. It initially consisted of the combined band reparations claim (known as the band class) and the residential school day scholars claim. Day scholars are survivors who were forced to attend the institutions during the day but went home at night, and were left out of the 2006 residential schools settlement.

The Trudeau government reached an out-of-court settlement with day scholars in June 2021, agreeing to pay cash compensation to survivors and their descendants, settling part of the *Gottfriedson* case.

Canada initially refused to negotiate with the remaining band reparations plaintiffs. Their case was

for our own day scholars and also for all of the Indigenous people in Canada who live with Canada's racist legacy," he said.

More details of how funds will be disbursed are expected in the months to come. Under the agreement, there will be an initial payment of \$200,000 to all 325 First Nations, which will allow them all to create a 10-year plan for how they want to revitalize their language and culture, under the four pillars.

Peter Grant, lawyer and class counsel for the plaintiffs, said that as that plan is brought forward, there will be an initial "kick-start fund" of \$325 million.

"Although that looks like an equal amount ... there will be a base rate, and then there will be a rate based on population," Grant said.

"Some nations are remote, so the cost for them to implement is much higher ... that will be determined by the board, but that will be an additional to the \$325 million."

Grant says that it is entirely up to the nations how they wish to spend the settlement money, including on projects like cultural centres or language teachers. They are expected to report back to the non-profit board regularly, but there are no strict requirements for how funds are used, according to Grant. "There's been a lot of thought in these four pillars that I think gives us that that ability in our leadership, the ability to be dynamic and create ... what's important to us as Indigenous people," Gottfriedson said.

Officials and claimants will appear before a Federal Court judge in Vancouver on Feb. 27 to seek approval for the settlement.

With files from Brett Forester and Akshay Kulkarni

N.A. Filipino Star Pictorial News



Barbara Walters, the pioneering TV journalist whose interviewing skills made her one of the most prominent figures in broadcasting, died peacefully surrounded by loved ones at her home at age 93 Dec. 30, 2022. She was born Sept. 25, 1929 in Boston.



Angela Bassett, left, and Ke Huy Quan were the evening's first winners at the 2023 Golden Globes ceremony. Bassett won best supporting actress for her performance in Black Panther: Wakanda Forever, and Quan won best supporting actor for his performance in Everything Everywhere All At Once. "Thankfully more than 30 years later two guys thought of me, they remembered that kid and they gave me an opportunity to try again," he said in his acceptance speech, thanking the film's two directors. (Getty Images)



Quinta Brunson poses with the award for Best Actress in a Television Series - Musical or Comedy award for Abbott Elementary. The comedy series picked up three awards on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 (Getty Images)



Pope Benedict died at the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery on 31 December 2022 at 9:34 a.m. Central European Time (UTC+01), at the age of 95. Archbishop Georg Gänswein, Benedict's personal secretary and confidant, said that his last words, heard by a nurse, were "Signore ti amo" (Italian for 'Lord, I love you'). He was born April 16, 1927, Marktl, Germany.



Lisa Marie Presley, a singer-songwriter, Elvis' only daughter and a dedicated keeper of her father's legacy, died Thursday, Jan. 12, 2023 after being hospitalized for a medical emergency. She was 54. Her death was confirmed by her mother, Priscilla Presley.



(CNN) Britain's King Charles paid a heartfelt tribute to his mother, the late Queen Elizabeth, in his first Christmas broadcast as monarch on Sunday, Dec. 25, 2022. The new King expressed gratitude to members of the public who had shown love and sympathy in the wake of his mother's death in September.